



# STATE OF WISCONSIN

## DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

### DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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## **4<sup>th</sup> of July Holiday: Play It Safe**

### **Injuries from fireworks a major concern**

(MADISON) – The 4<sup>th</sup> of July and fireworks just go together. With the holiday approaching this is a great time to remember the dangers of fireworks which can cause serious injuries and death if not properly used.

- In 2011 (latest available statistics), doctors treated 9,600 fireworks-related injuries in U.S. hospital emergency rooms.
- 54% of fireworks injuries were burns.
- 23% of injuries were contusions and lacerations.
- 26% of those victims were under the age of 15.
- 68% of the injured were males.
- Sparklers, fountains and novelties accounted for 34% of firework related injuries.
- 89% of injuries involved fireworks that Federal regulations permit consumers to use.
- Sparklers are designed to throw off showers of hot sparks with temperatures exceeding 1200 degrees.
- 17,800 fires were started by fireworks resulting in 40 injuries and \$32 million in direct property damage.

(Courtesy National Fire Protection Association)

"We all like to celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, but mishandling fireworks could cause a tragic end to the festivities," said Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Brian Satula. "Make sure you purchase only legal fireworks, follow the manufacturer's directions on storing and lighting fireworks and NEVER have a child light them."

Here are more tips to protect yourself and your family:

- Adults igniting the fireworks should always wear eye protection and never have any part of the body over the firework.
- Only buy fireworks from reliable sellers.
- Use fireworks only outdoors.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Always have water handy (a garden hose or a bucket).
- Light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from buildings, dry leaves and flammable materials.
- Light only one firework at a time.
- Never throw or point fireworks at other people or animals.
- Keep your pets indoors to reduce the risk that they will run loose and get injured. Many animals have very sensitive ears and can be stressed or frightened due to the lighting of fireworks.

The best advice, leave the fireworks displays to trained professionals. Then sit back and “ohhh...ahhh” as you enjoy the show! For more information go to [readywisconsin.wi.gov](http://readywisconsin.wi.gov). For daily safety tips, follow us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/readywisconsin](https://www.facebook.com/readywisconsin)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/readywisconsin](https://www.twitter.com/readywisconsin)).